CITY OF FITCHBURG
Board of
Park Commissioners

1000 John Fitch Highway
Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

Correspondence: 166 Boulder Drive, Suite 108, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

Board of Park Commissioners Meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 5, 2019
Location: Memorial Middle School Cafeteria

Call to Order:
The February 5, 2019 meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM

Commissioner Members Present: Jon Ricciutti, Jim McGrath, Mary Giannetti, Mary Whitney and Dave Madigan.
Also Present: Gary Withington, Nate LaRose, Joe Ferguson, Nick Capasso, Marc Dohan, Francisco Ramos, Vincent Pusateri, Councilor David Clark, Mayor Stephen DiNatale, AJ Tourigny, Tom Skwierawski, Councilor Sam Squalia, Councilor Marcus DiNatale

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Jim McGrath

Minutes of the Meeting: A motion was made by Mary Giannetti and Seconded by Mary Whitney to accept the minutes for the January 8, 2019. Approved 5-0.

A moment of silence in remembrance of Jean McCarthy. Jean McCarthy was a long standing park employee and founder of the Friends of Coggshall Park. Since retiring Jean has continued to assist the Parks Department and will be greatly missed.

Reports:
Friends of Coggshall Park Report:

A motion was made by Jim McGrath and seconded by Dave Madigan to table the Friends of Coggshall Park Report. Motion approved 5-0.


Mr. Skwierawski and all presented on the current status of the Fitchburg Arts Community Project at the Former B.F. Brown Elementary School as it relates to Lowe Playground and parking requirements.

Mayor DiNatale expressed the importance of the Fitchburg Arts Community Project for the neighborhood and the potential for over 4.5 million dollars of potential investment.

Mr. Capasso from the Fitchburg Art Museum expressed the importance of this project to the neighboring community, which includes the Art Museum. Mr. Capasso spoke to the perceived “dangers” within the neighborhood and the significant improvement the Arts Community could have on perception and physical presence within the neighborhood.

Mr. Dohan from NewVue Communities provided an update on the current phase of construction at BF Brown which is working to secure and seal the roof. The current phase of construction is nearly
complete. NewVue is working towards completing a schematic design for the project and is seeking input from the planning board. Attached please see a current draft design of parking for the project.

Mr. Ramos presented on recent community engagement to evaluate the condition of Lowe Playground and potential desired uses. Please see attached Summary. The engagement included 3 meetings with community members asking what residents would like to see at Lowe. The meetings occurred at the Sundial, the YMCA and the Fitchburg Art Museum.

Mr. Ferguson from the Reimagine North of Main Initiative discussed how the proposed Art Community fell in line with the mission of Reimagine North of Main to focus on creating better spaces within our neighborhood. He complimented the ongoing work around economic development and community engagement. Mr. Ferguson expressed the public safety concerns regarding the board of Lowe Park adjacent to High Street.

Mr. Skwierawski from the Community Development Department discussed the importance of the partnerships with Reimagine North of Main and the ongoing community engagement efforts. Mr. Skwierawski discussed the potential grant funds from CDBG for park and landscape design which could be used to match funds from a PARC grant or smart growth zoning density bonus payments. The Community Development Department is committed to seeing park improvements take place at Lowe Park.

The Board discussed a desire to see improved communication regarding planning and construction for the project. They asked that further communication be directed through the Recreation Director. They also expressed a desire that while the land adjacent to BF Brown is park property that any temporary changes to fencing or public access be discussed with the board.

The board requested that a more detailed plan be provided which should include dimensions for parking spaces and driveways. The board would also like updates based upon feedback from the Planning Board.

Mr. Ramos when into greater detail about his discussions with seniors and residents about safety and use within the park. Mr. Ramos spoke about a need for additional lighting and security within the park. Potential the need for improved fencing. This list provided is not a judgement of the Board of Park Commissions, but a list of possible improvements residents would be interested in seeing.

The Fitchburg Arts Community Project is still working on design for the completed project and adjacent parking. The City is seeking changes to the Smart Growth ordinance to include this project area and parking requirements are set by the Planning Board. The designs being presented are preliminary to allow for continued discussion by all entities involved.

A motion was made by Jim McGrath and seconded by Mary Giannetti to accept the Community Development Report. Motion approved 5-0.

Parks Maintenance Report: See Attached.
Report made by Gary Withington.

A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Mart Giannetti to accept the Parks maintenance report. Motion approved 5-0.

Riverfront Parks and Trails Fund Report:

A motion was made by Jim McGrath and seconded by Dave Madigan to table the report. Motion approved 5-0.

Recreation Department Report: See Attached.
Report submitted by Nathan LaRose

A motion was made by Jim McGrath and seconded by Mary Whitney to accept the report into the minutes. Motion approved 5-0.

Old Business:
No old business was discussed.

New Business:
Nick Capasso from the Fitchburg Art Museum requested the use of Lowe Playground on April 29, 2019 for the Sky Art Event.

A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Mary Giannetti to approve the park permit request for Lowe Playground. Motion approved 5-0.

SCC New England requested the use of Coolidge Park on June 19-21, 2019 for a Youth Football Camp.

A motion was made by Jim McGrath and seconded by Dave Madigan to send the request to the Recreation Director for approval. Motion approved 5-0.

Community Issues:
No Community Issues were discussed.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Dave Madigan to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved 5-0.
CITY OF FITCHBURG
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

NAME OF PUBLIC BODY HOLDING THE MEETING: BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 05, 2019
MEETING TIME: 5:30 AM □ PM □
MEETING PLACE: MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
    Name of building (if applicable)       CAFETERIA
    Room number (if applicable)           615 ROLLSTONE STREET
    Address                               FITCHBURG, MA 01420
    City

AGENDA ITEMS:*

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes: Regular Meeting January 8, 2019

Selection of Board Chair and Vice Chair

Department Reports:
    • Friends of Coggshall Park Report
    • Community Development Report
    • Parks Maintenance Report
    • Riverfront Parks and Trails Fund Report
    • Recreation Director's Report

Old Business:
    • Discussion on amending the Park Rules (tabled)
    • Discussion on purchasing additional chairs and tables for Coggshall Park. (tabled)

New Business:
    • Fitchburg Art Museum Park Use Request for Sky Art Event at Lowe Playground on April 29, 2019
    • Request by SCC New England to host Central MA Youth Football Camp at Coolidge Park on Jun 19-21, 2019

Community Issues: Open Forum

Nathan LaRose, Recreation Director
Name and title of person submitting this notice

*Please note: Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requires that all topics that the Chair reasonably anticipates must be listed and that the list of topics must be sufficiently specific to reasonably inform the public of the issues to be discussed at the meeting.
The information in this summary report was collected in a meeting at the Fitchburg Art Museum, and in two focus groups, one at the YMCA with youth and one at the Sundial Apartments with seniors. Some of the community leaders and city officials present in these meetings are: Chief Ernest Martineau, Lieutenant Jeffrey Howe, Pastor Steve Mayo from the Elm Street Community Church, and Nick Capasso from the Fitchburg Art Museum.

We met with approximately 45 individuals in the course of the three community meetings.

Some of the suggestions from the community that were mentioned in all of these meetings are:

1. That the Lowe Park is an integral part of the local community
2. Some of the groups that are using the Park on a regular basis: the Longsjo Middle School, the YMCA, the Elm Street Community Church, local residents
3. The main group that cannot use the Lowe Park because of lack of safety: Sundial Apartments and senior residents
4. Need for cleaning and maintaining the Lowe Park
5. Need to install lighting in the park
6. Need to install a water fountain in the park
7. Lack of safety with stone wall on High Street side of park
8. Garbage, trash, and even discarded pieces of furniture, being thrown inside the park via the High Street side
PARKS REPORT

Picked up trash in Parks and on Main Street
Helped with plowing and sanding
Plowed Coggshall and Coolidge Parks
Cleaned sidewalks on bridges and around Senior Center
Started to get ready for Winter Fest
Plowed Coggshall and Coolidge Parks
Cleaned sidewalks on bridges and around Senior Center
Cleaned sidewalk on Bemis Road
Trimmed trees and hedges at Coolidge Park
Salted Sidewalks
Removed garland from lights on Main Street
Removed garland from Monumen Park
Recreation Director’s Report: February 5, 2019

Office Administration:
- Attended City Council Meeting to update Council on status of Trails Visioning Committee.
- Received permit application from MassWildlife to request permission to import swans. Currently looking at vendor options to purchase swans.
- Met with Friends of Coggshall to discuss their newsletter and swans.
- The Grant Application for Mirror Lake Accessibility Project Phase 1 was submitted.

Programming:
- Biddy League Basketball:
  - PeeWee games entering week 7
  - Grades 3-5 games entering week 7
  - Grades 6-8 games entering week 4
- Beth has been conducting meetings to begin forming committees to plan 3 festivals at Riverfront park.
- Concerts on the Common are set for every Wednesday in July and August starting July 10th.
- Annual Winterfest was a success. Thank you to everyone who participated. Special Thanks to Beers for Good, the Fitchburg Library, Jim McGrath, Jon Ricciutti, Debbie Jeffries and Mary Cringan.
- Currently planning annual Easter event. Date is set for April 13, 2019
- Currently planning a men’s pickup basketball program.